

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Last reviewed:	June 2026
Next review due:	June 2027
Reviewed by:	Vice Principal-Pastoral Director of Safeguarding Head of IT
Approved by Board of Governors:	June 2026

1. Scope

This policy relates to the use of smart phones, watches, glasses, cameras and similar devices on school sites. Please see the school's Bring Your Own Device Policy for information relating to devices for educational purposes. The policy operates within a wider national policy framework which includes but is not limited to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Guidance on mobile phones in schools from the Department for Education February 2026
- [Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK](#) updated February 2026
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education setting February 2022
- Supporting students with medical conditions at school
- SEND
- Young Carers
- [Professional and Personnel Relationships](#)

This policy links with wider policies in school and should be read in conjunction with the following, which are available from the [school website](#) or from the school office on request:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy
- Behaviour, Rules, Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Bring Your Own Device Policy (BYOD) for staff and students
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Conducting a Search – Policy and Procedures
- Data Protection Policy
- E- Safety Policy
- Examinations Access Arrangements Policy
- Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Policy
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Students Policy

2. Aim

At d'Overbroeck's we believe that connection, relationships and belonging are important, and we believe the students thrive academically and socially away from the attention of mobile devices. Where devices (laptops/tablets) are needed for educational purposes, the school ensures appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place and regularly reviewed in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, to prevent access to harmful or inappropriate content. In our aim to create opportunity for students to engage fully in the community, the school's approach is designed to support learning, reduce distraction, and strengthen safeguarding by limiting unnecessary mobile phone use during the school day. Due to the significant advances in mobile technology, there is the potential for mobile phones, smart watches, smart glasses and cameras to be used inappropriately. This could compromise the confidentiality and safeguarding of students in our care.

This policy applies to all relevant digital devices, which facilitate communication or have the capability to record sound or images. The policy applies to both school and privately-owned equipment brought on site by either students, staff or third parties, as well as school and privately-owned equipment used to access d'Overbroeck's services and data.

This policy is freely available to parents on the school's website, and the policy is shared with new parents to the school upon acceptance of a place.

3. Education

As part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education provided through the school's Personal Development programme, students are taught about the dangers of mobile phones and smart devices including:

- online harms and avoiding these;
- loss of focus in lessons, classroom disruption and an increase in bullying/online bullying;
- misinformation and disinformation;
- how generative AI works and is used;
- the ethical considerations related to generative AI, including regarding people's rights and the environment;
- the impact and possible harms of generative AI tools, such as chatbots, on wellbeing, relationships and seeking advice;
- deepfakes;
- ethical, legal and social implications of sexual image sharing, including AI-generated imagery and deepfake material.

Students are equally taught the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment for learning and concentration and are encouraged to see such an environment as desirable and valuable. See Relationships and Sex Education Policy for further details.

4. Student mobile devices

The school does not accept any responsibility for mobile phones, smart watches or other devices for personal use that students might bring into school. Any personal item brought into school is done so at the owner's risk.

4.1 Senior School

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing a mobile device onto teaching sites.

We understand that some students travel long distances to school on public transport and wish to have access to a mobile phone for safety reasons during the journey. Students in the Senior School are permitted to bring a mobile phone into school if they require this for communications regarding travel to and from school; this should be switched off on arrival at the site and handed in during morning registration. They are returned at the end of the school day and must not be used on site.

Mobiles phones will be kept in a locked unit throughout the day. The school holds no responsibility for any device brought onto site.

4.2 Sixth Form

The school prohibits the use of mobile phones by Sixth Form students in front of younger students and Sixth Formers visiting the Senior School site must keep their mobile phones in bags at all times. Across other teaching sites, Sixth Form students are permitted to use their phone in designated spaces for making calls and for educational purposes. Phones may be used to make payment at the café in the Common Room at the Sixth Form but should be put away immediately after use. Students may not use mobile phones, smart watches or glasses in any other areas including at Milford House. If students need to use a mobile phone to access information for their studies in a lesson, they may do so after seeking permission from their teacher.

4.3 Boarding

We recognise that for our international community, contact with home is only possible at certain times due to the time differences with the UK. Sixth Form boarders may use their mobile phones when they are in the boarding houses. Boarding students in the Senior School will have access to their mobile phones until they arrive at the Senior School for the start of the school day. Boarders may make calls to family and friends in the boarding house in the morning before arriving at Senior School. Boarders will be allowed onto site from 8.00am at which point mobile phones will be handed in.

4.4 Curfew

In the evenings and at weekends, all boarders will be able to use their mobile phones. Students in Years 9 and 10 are expected to hand their phones in each evening at curfew, 9.00pm Monday to Thursday. Students in Years 11, 12 and 13 may keep their phones with them in the evenings. The school will monitor the use of devices and phones in the evenings and at weekends and reserves the right to remove the privilege of having a mobile device until a student's wellbeing or behaviour improves.

4.5 Sanctions

If a student is seen to have, or to be using, a mobile phone, smart watch or smart glasses on the school site, without permission from a member of staff, the school's Behaviour, Rules, Rewards and Sanctions Policy will be followed. This applies to activities on and off teaching sites. Any student found to be in possession or in use of a prohibited smart device either in the Senior School or in prohibited areas in the Sixth Form will have their device confiscated

until the end of the day. On the first occasion, confiscated items may be collected from the member of Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on duty at the end of the day. On subsequent occasions, parents will be asked to collect the item on the Friday afternoon. In the case of boarders, devices can be collected from the member of SLT on duty on the Friday once parents have been informed. Persistent breaches will result in an escalation of the school's Behaviour, Rules, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

Sixth Form students remain subject to the school's behaviour policy and misuse of their phone has the potential to lead to sanctions of response in line with the school's Behaviour, Rules, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

If a student under the age of 16 does not hand their phone in on time in boarding, the curfew will be reviewed to 9.00pm for one week and the matter will be escalated in line with the school's Behaviour, Rules, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

The school will monitor the use of devices and phones in the designated areas of the Sixth Form and in boarding houses. The school reserves the right to remove the privilege of a student being able to use a mobile device until a student's wellbeing or behaviour improves.

5. Searching

The school has a statutory power to search a student of their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the student is in possession of a prohibited item or any item identified in the school rules as an item that may be searched for. This includes mobile phones and devices. Please refer to the school's Conducting a Search – Policy and Procedure.

6. Exemptions

Students requiring smartphones for medical reasons (such as diabetes monitoring) or regular, monitored access as part of their EHCP or SEND access will have individual arrangements agreed in line with care/support plans. The school remains fully committed to supporting individual needs while ensuring consistency for the wider community and the school's commitment to the Equality Act 2010.

Allowing flexibility for individual students (including Young Carers) does not mean that these students should be exempt from all restrictions on the use of their mobile phone. Access will be overseen by the SLT or SEND department. Students may be granted access for a specific purpose, at a specific time and will be supervised in the ILC at Senior School or in the SLT or SEND offices at Sixth Form. Agreed access arrangements will be recorded on the student's individual care or support plan.

7. Mobile phones on outings and trips

Phone use will normally follow the school policy, and students will not be permitted to use mobile phones during the visit/trip. However, the implementation of this policy for trips will be risk based assessed. High risk activities, or those where a student could be separated from the group may warrant the need for students to have a mobile phone with them for safety purposes but switched off unless there is an emergency, and handed in as and when deemed appropriate by the Trip Leader.

Students' use of mobile phones on residential and day trips will be at the discretion of the Trip Leader and in consultation with the Educational Visits Coordinator once the risk assessment has been completed and reviewed. Instructions on permitted use of phones will be communicated to students

in advance of a trip as part of the code of conduct for the visit and must be always adhered to by students on the trip.

When permitted, students must use their phones responsibly and ensure that they do not use them in any way that will bring themselves or the school into disrepute.

8. Staff mobile devices

- Staff must not receive or make calls on their personal mobile phones during lessons and while supervising students.
- Staff may use their mobile phones on site in designated areas such as staffrooms and offices, where no students are present, or for multi-factor authentication.
- Staff must securely protect access to the functions of their mobile phones.
- Staff are not permitted to use recording equipment on their personal mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of students, or to share images.

It is recognised that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication during offsite activities and the school provides Trip Leaders with school-owned mobile phones for use during these times. Contact with parents during school trips should be made using a school mobile.

Any use of a smart watch is subject to the same safeguarding rules as any personal device such as a mobile phone.

9. Volunteers, visitors, governors and contractors

All volunteers, visitors, governors, and contractors who are required to sign into the school are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations and asked to read and agree a related statement at Reception.

10. Parents

As part of our wider safeguarding duty to our student and commitment to the benefits of a phone free environment, we would prefer parents not to use their mobile devices while visiting the school. Parents who wish to contact their child during the school day should contact Reception at Senior School or the Sixth Form by telephone or email and a message will be relayed to the student as soon as practicable. We ask parents to support d'Overbroeck's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and encourage parents to reinforce and discuss the policy at home, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

Where a parent has a question or concern about this policy, we ask that they contact the Head of Senior School or Head of Sixth Form, who will be able to address the query in a timely manner.

11. Student webcams and tablets

The school's 'Bring Your Own Device' policy allows students to bring in a device capable of capturing images even without their mobile phone. Capturing images without permission from a teacher for a clear and specific purpose is against school rules and any student caught taking images will be made aware of their actions in accordance with the school's Behaviour, Rules, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

12. General

- 12.1 No electronic copies of photographs taken by the school should be passed to outside agencies without the permission of the parent, or unless there is a safeguarding issue.
- 12.2 Images such as those taken by marketing are only to be used for a specific purpose and will not be used in any other context.
- 12.3 External photographers engaged by the school will be treated as any other visitors and appropriate levels of supervision will be in place at all times. This will ensure that there is no unsupervised access to children. Only photographs approved by the school will be taken and published.

Please see the school's Taking, Storing and Using Images of Students Policy for further information.

13. Disposal of photographs

Where photographs have been printed for use in school, they should be disposed of carefully. Where photographs are of individual students, the photograph may be given to the parent. Other photographs should be shredded. Photographs should not be disposed of in bins.

The Mobile Phone Policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will be available to parents via the school website.

*